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ABSTRACT

This summary report of test data provides meaningful demographic information about students in the Albuquerque (New Mexico) Public Schools taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the American College Testing (ACT) Program tests. The district's scores for the 1986-87 year were higher on the ACT than were those of students across the nation. Mean ACT scores for the total in English, Math, Social Studies, and Natural Science, and the Composite were above national averages as they have been for 10 years. Far smaller numbers of students in New Mexico take the SAT, since the ACT is accepted by all colleges and universities in the state. Verbal scores on the SAT for district students were well above national averages, despite a slight decrease in the mean for all students to 485 from 494 the preceding year. Mathematics scores on the SAT were also well above national averages, with a mean for total students of 535, a very slight decrease from the previous year. Extensive tables provide detailed test results and information on high school grade point averages, family incomes, ethnic backgrounds, and educational aspirations. (SLD)

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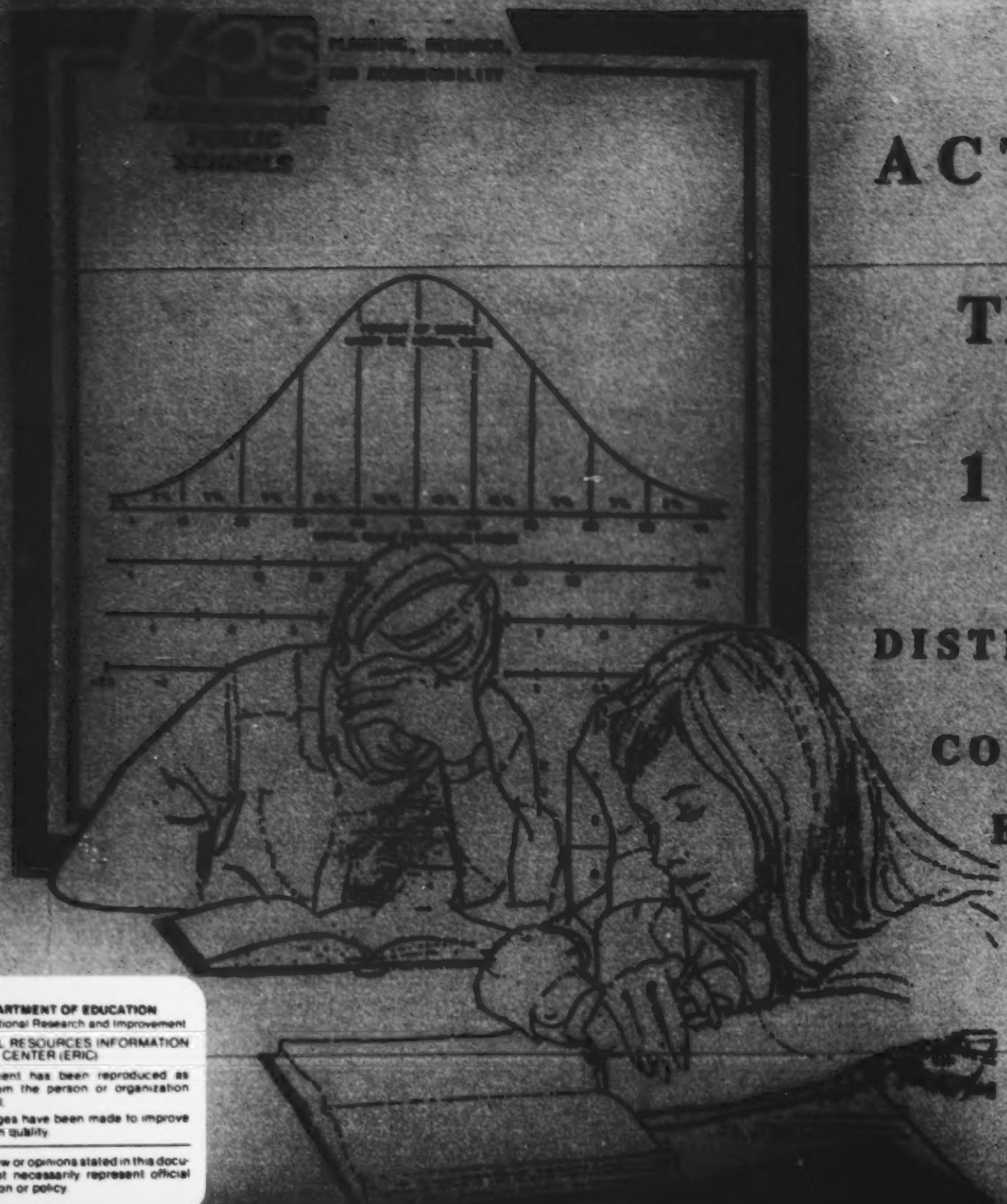
ACT & SAT

TESTING

1986 -87

DISTRICT REPORT:

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS



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Prepared by:

Sandra O'Neal
Assistant Director for Testing and Evaluation

DECEMBER, 1987

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INTRODUCTION

WHY STUDENTS TAKE THE ACT OR THE SAT

Many institutions of higher learning require entering students to submit college entrance examination results. The primary purpose of this requirement is to help colleges and universities make decisions which will maximize the entering student's chances for admission and placement in courses which best fit the individual's needs and abilities. A large number of Albuquerque Public Schools' students voluntarily participate in either the American College Testing Program (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) of the College Entrance Examination Board. While the main purposes of these programs are planning for the individual student and input to a selection process for colleges and universities, this summary report of test data provides meaningful demographic data about participating APS students.

College entrance examinations are designed to measure academic achievement, to predict success in college and to help the student understand his or her strengths and weaknesses as related to college work. A major skill for doing college work is the application of analytical reasoning for the solution of functional and practical problems. Accordingly, entrance examinations contain a large number of problem-solving exercises and proportionately fewer measures of lower level skills.

Student questionnaires associated with college entrance examinations help college admissions personnel understand each individual applicant by providing personal information. These data include educational plans, interests, and needs in addition to such things as out-of-class accomplishments and college extracurricular plans. A student may also indicate a potential need for financial aid, proposed major field of study, and special interests or goals.

Students who take college entrance exams pay a fee to take the ACT or the SAT. APS high school counseling offices serve as testing information centers for these tests by providing test registration information to any student who requests it. Students complete registration forms and send them with payment directly to the testing company. Any junior or senior in high school may take either the ACT or the SAT by following this procedure. In special cases fee waivers are available for both tests.

It should be noted that both ACT and SAT test results have limited application to APS high school instructional planning. College entrance examination test results should not be viewed as assessment of the APS curriculum for two reasons. First, not all APS high school students take these tests and second, the questions on the tests are not designed to match the APS high school curriculum.

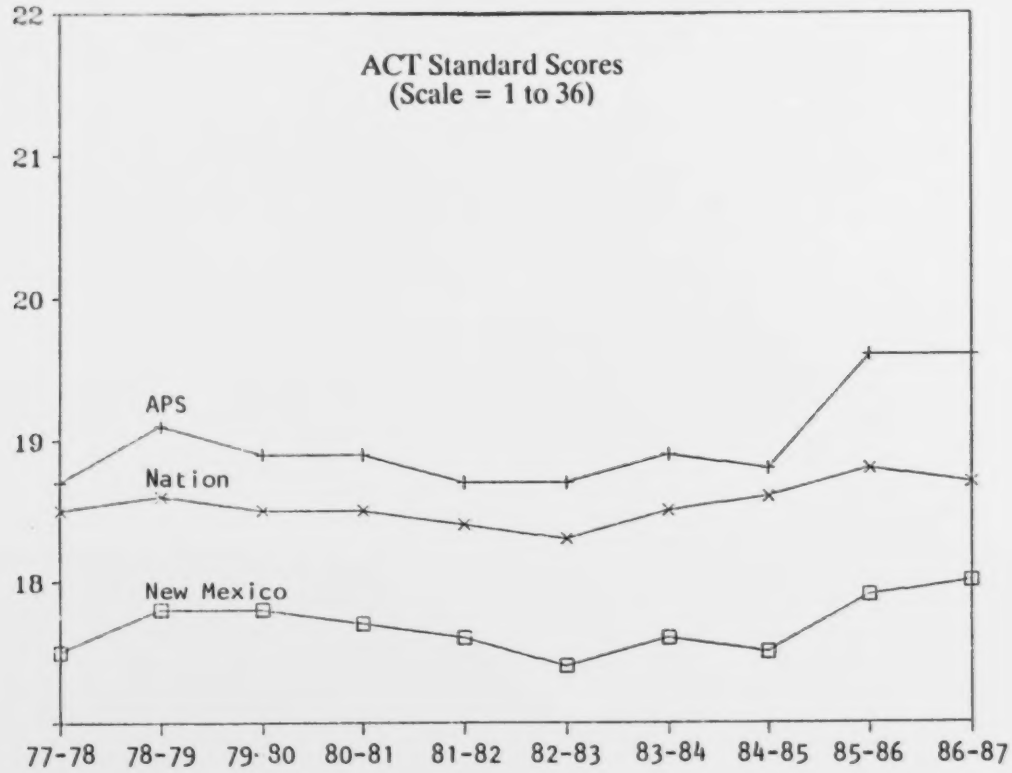
ACT 1986-87 SUMMARY INFORMATION

For the 1986-87 school year the scores of the Albuquerque Public Schools' students on the ACT are higher than those of students across the nation. As can be seen in Table 1 (page 4), APS mean scores for the total group in English, Math, Social Studies, Natural Science, and the Composite Score were all above national averages. When compared to the previous year, APS scores have improved in two areas.

Figure 1 (page 3) shows the trend of ACT scores for APS, New Mexico, and the nation, for the years 1977-78 to 1986-87. APS students scored above the national average for the past ten years, and scored considerably higher than the New Mexico total average during the same time period.

Table 1 (page 4) compares the APS boys' and girls' scores to the national averages. From these figures it can be seen that APS boys' and girls' scores in all areas are above the respective national norms.

Other information contained in this report reflects the students' scores by self-identified high school curriculum background, the number and percentage of senior (12th grade) students taking the ACT, and other characteristics of students taking the ACT.



	77-78	78-79	79-80	80-81	81-82	82-83	83-84	84-85	85-86	86-87
APS Composite	18.7	19.1	18.9	18.9	18.7	18.7	18.9	18.8	19.6	19.6
NM Composite	17.5	17.8	17.8	17.7	17.6	17.4	17.6	17.5	17.9	18.0
National Composite	18.5	18.6	18.5	18.5	18.4	18.3	18.5	18.6	18.8	18.7

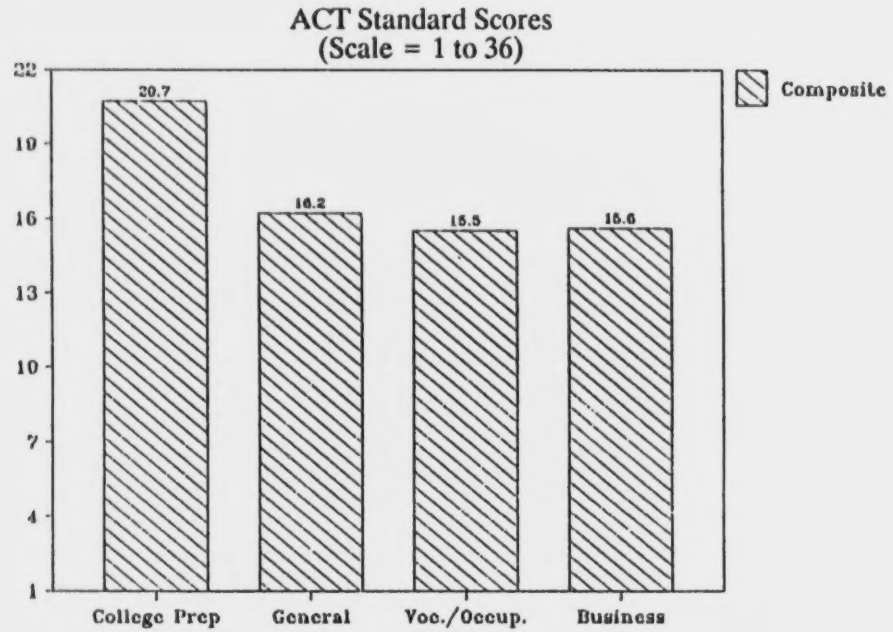
FIGURE 1. AMERICAN COLLEGE TEST (ACT) SCORES APS, NEW MEXICO, & NATIONAL COMPOSITE AVERAGES 1977-78 TO 1986-87

Figure 1 reflects the APS, New Mexico and national ACT score trends from 1977-78 to 1986-87. While declining scores were experienced for several years in the early 1970's, APS scores have shown a general upward trend. In 1986-87 APS, New Mexico, and national scores were stable.

TABLE 1. APS AND NATIONAL AMERICAN COLLEGE TEST RESULTS (ACT) 1984-87 REPORTED BY GENDER

		ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS			NATION		
		84-85	85-86	86-87	84-85	85-86	86-87
NUMBER TESTED	Boys	1091	1007	1138	338,668	334,126	356,704
	Girls	1319	1246	1330	400,168	395,480	420,740
	TOTAL	2410	2253	2468	738,836	729,606	777,444
ENGLISH	Boys	17.6	18.5	18.9	17.6	17.9	17.9
	Girls	19.1	19.8	19.6	18.6	18.9	18.9
	TOTAL	18.4	19.2	19.3	18.1	18.5	18.4
MATH	Boys	19.1	19.2	19.8	18.6	18.8	18.6
	Girls	16.3	16.9	16.8	16.0	16.0	16.1
	TOTAL	17.6	17.9	18.2	17.2	17.3	17.2
SOCIAL STUDIES	Boys	18.1	19.2	19.0	18.3	18.6	18.4
	Girls	17.0	17.8	17.3	16.6	16.9	16.7
	TOTAL	17.5	18.4	18.1	17.4	17.6	17.5
NATURAL SCIENCE	Boys	22.7	23 5	23.9	22.6	22.7	22.8
	Girls	20.2	21.2	20.7	20.0	20.2	20.1
	TOTAL	21.3	22.2	22.2	21.2	21.4	21.4
COMPOSITE	Boys	19.5	20.2	20 5	19.4	19.6	19.5
	Girls	18.3	19.0	18.7	17.9	18.1	18.1
	TOTAL	18.8	19.6	19.6	18.6	18.8	18.7

For the 1986-87 school year, ACT scores for APS were slightly higher than the national average scores in all four content areas as well as the composite score. Trends can be examined in each content area for boys and girls by studying the figures for the three years reported. The number of students in APS taking the ACT has increased somewhat from 1984-85 levels, with the number of students nationwide taking the test increasing also.



	College Prep	General	Voc./Occup.	Business
Composite	20.7	16.2	15.5	15.6
Number of students	1786	381	96	121
Percent	74%	16%	4%	5%

FIGURE 2. APS 1986-87 ACT SCORES
(According to Student-Reported High School Curriculum)

A word of caution regarding the interpretation of this graph: Students are asked to indicate the nature of the high school curriculum they chose. No guidelines are provided to the student by ACT for making this choice. Therefore, it is not clearly understood what factors affect the student's indication that he has followed a college preparatory, general, vocational, or business course of study. Eighty-four students did not indicate a high school curriculum.

It is interesting to observe that approximately three-fourths of the college-bound students (74%) feel they have chosen a college preparatory course of study during their high school years. This figure is not confirmed by the local district. Students who experienced a college preparatory high school curriculum scored higher on the ACT than any other designated curriculum group. Not all students complete the ACT survey questionnaire, making the number of students reflected on this page slightly less than the total of APS students who took the test.

TABLE 2. GRADE LEVEL AT TIME OF ACT TESTING
1986-87

	BOYS			GIRLS			TOTAL		
	N*	%	ACT Comp	N*	%	ACT Comp	N*	%	ACT Comp
High School Junior	232	21%	23.2	218	17%	21.2	450	18%	22.2
High School Senior	893	79%	19.9	1088	83%	18.3	1981	81%	19.0
Other	3	0%	21.0	10	1%	15.6	13	1%	16.8
No Response	10			14			24		
Total	1138			1330			2468		

*N = number tested

Almost one-fifth (18%) of the 468 students taking the ACT were high school juniors at the time of testing. Another 81% were high school seniors. One percent was identified as "other." This classification includes those students who graduated previously and are now deciding to attend college. Students classified as juniors at the time of testing typically score higher than seniors probably because they have made an early decision for higher education and may be highly motivated. Students in the "other" category frequently score lower than either juniors or seniors. Possible reasons for this are: 1) they have been out of school for some time and may have forgotten some of the information tested, 2) they may not have chosen high school courses which would provide for college preparation.

TABLE 3. PERCENT OF APS SENIORS TAKING ACT COMPARED TO END-OF-YEAR SENIOR ENROLLMENT, 1978-1987

	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87
End of Year Senior Enrollment	6189	6328	6149	6018	5910	5428	5174	4864	4877	5204
Se iors Tested or the ACT	2202	2307	2167	2164	2241	2126	1917	1823	1759	1981
Percent of Seniors Tested	36%	36%	35%	36%	38%	39%	37%	37%	36%	38%

Since 1978 the percent of senior (12th grade) students taking the ACT has shown an unsteady but increasing trend. Ten years ago, 36% of the APS senior students took the ACT. In 1986-87, 38% of the APS seniors took the ACT.

On a separate part of the ACT, students are asked to respond to a number of questions regarding their high school education and plans for the future. Following is a summary of students' answers to the questions.

Quality of High School Education

When queried about various aspects of their high school, over half of this group of 2468 students indicated satisfaction with instruction, variety of course offerings, grading practices, library facilities, tests, and guidance.

Typical Student

The typical student in this group had an ACT composite score of 19.6 (group mean) compared to the national average for college-bound students of 18.7. A total of 36% aspired to a bachelor's degree, while 56% aspired to at least some graduate school or a professional degree. The most typically planned educational major for the group was business and commerce. The New Mexico institution where the largest number (1536) of APS students sent ACT scores was the University of New Mexico.

Special Needs

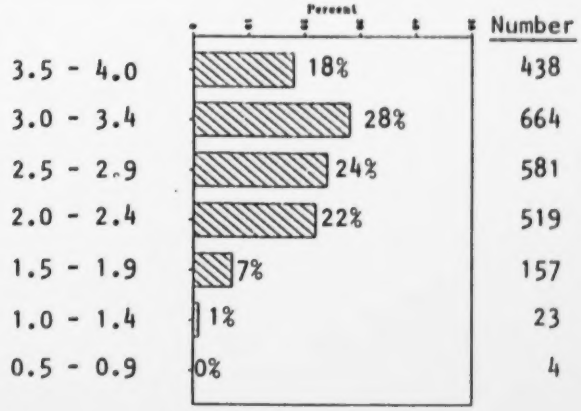
APS students expressed a need for special help in several areas, with the category and percentage of students expressing need in that area as follows:

Study skills	50%
Educational and vocational plans	46%
Math	45%
Reading	33%
Writing	29%
Personal counseling	13%

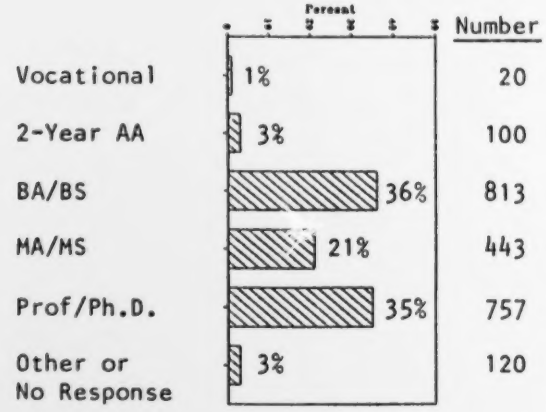
Sixty-two percent (62%) of APS students expressed expectations of working at a job during the school year. Seventy-five percent (75%) expected to apply for some type of financial aid.

STUDENT-REPORTED INFORMATION FROM THE ACT

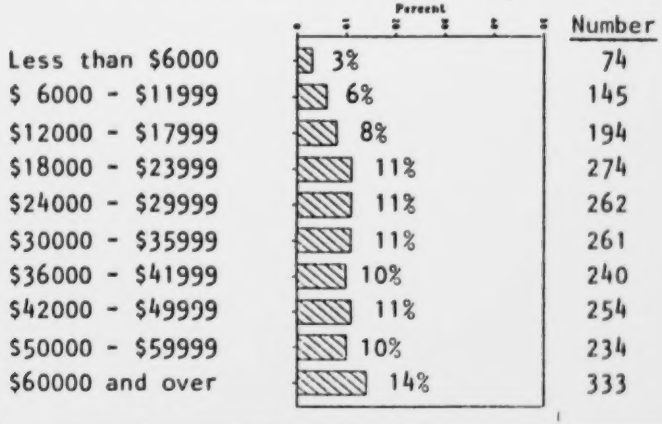
HIGH SCHOOL GRADE POINT AVERAGES



LEVEL OF EDUCATION ASPIRATIONS



ESTIMATED FAMILY INCOME



STUDENT-REPORTED ETHNIC BACKGROUND

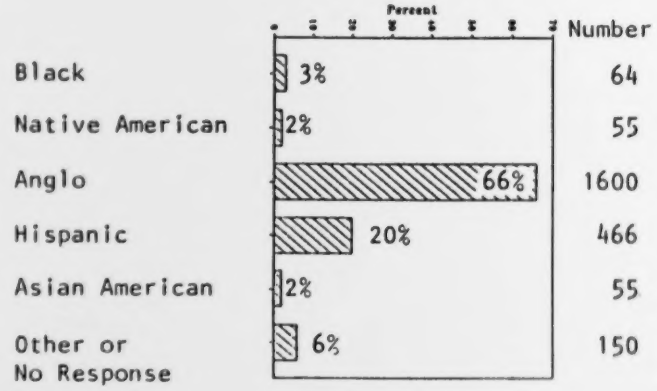


FIGURE 3. CHARACTERISTICS OF APS STUDENTS TAKING THE ACT IN 1986-87

Figure 3 reflects student-reported information regarding grades in high school, plans for college, family income, ethnicity, and location of the college the student plans to attend. Neither ACT nor APS attempts to cross-reference this student-reported data with any other source of information. Not all percentages equal 100% due to missing data.

SAT 1986-87 SUMMARY INFORMATION

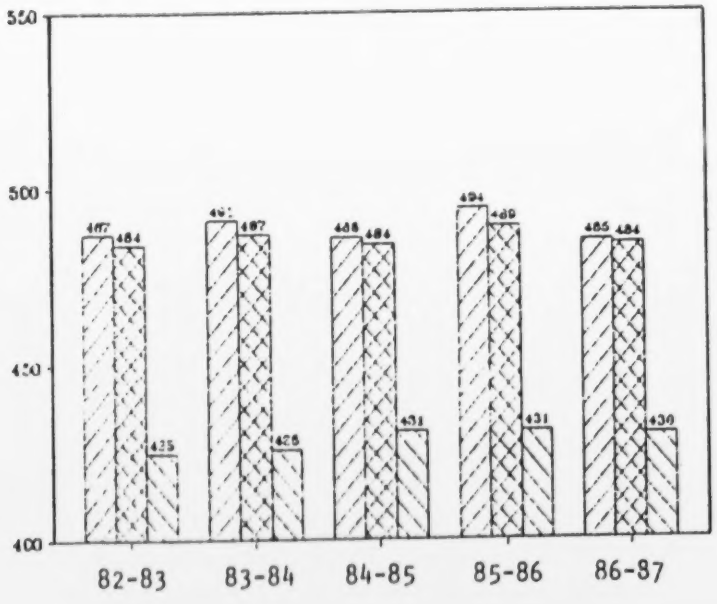
Although the large majority of college-bound students in New Mexico take the ACT, several hundred students in APS choose to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) each year. These students are typically those who intend to go out-of-state to college or who have not yet chosen the college or university they wish to attend. Because all universities and colleges in New Mexico accept the ACT, it is unnecessary for those students seeking higher education in New Mexico to take the SAT.

As can be seen in Table 4 (page 12), the number of students in APS taking the SAT increased by 35% from 1984-85 to 1986-87. APS Verbal scores are well above the national averages for boys, girls, and total for 1986-87. On the Verbal portion of the SAT, APS boys' scores decreased from 501 to 493. APS girls' scores also decreased from 489 to 476. When all students' scores are considered, the APS Verbal mean score decreased from 494 to 485.

Mathematics scores for boys and girls are well above national averages, as can be seen in Table 4. In Mathematics, APS boys' scores decreased one point, while APS girls' scores decreased eleven points.

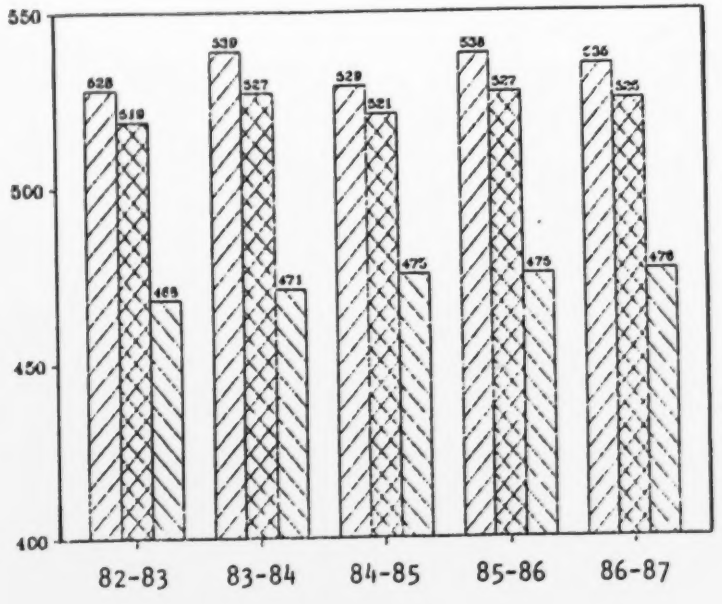
By way of national comparison, APS total students' mean score in the Verbal portion of the SAT was 485 compared to 430 for the nation. In Mathematics, APS students scored a mean of 535, well above the mean of 476 for the national group of almost a million students. These comparisons are displayed in Figure 5 of page 11.

VERBAL



	82-83	83-84	84-85	85-86	86-87
APS	487	491	486	494	485
NM	484	487	484	489	484
Nation	425	426	431	431	430

MATHEMATICS



	82-83	83-84	84-85	85-86	86-87
	528	539	529	538	535
	519	527	521	527	525
	468	471	475	475	476

FIGURE 4. FIVE YEAR APS HISTORY OF SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST RESULTS

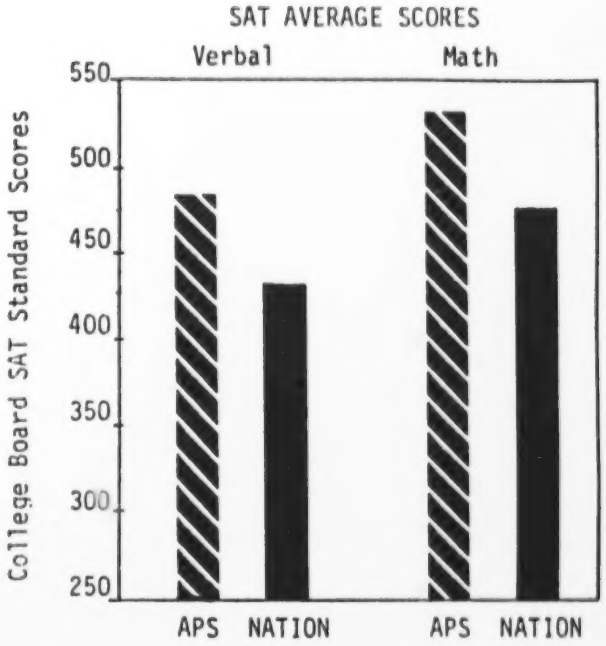
Figure 4 compares the APS, New Mexico, and national SAT results for the verbal and math subtests from 1982-83 to 1986-87. APS scores in both areas generally have been higher than those of New Mexico and the nation. It should be noted that APS scores are included in the New Mexico averages.

	APS			NATION		
	84-85	85-86	86-87	84-85	85-86	86-87
NO. TESTED						
Boys	196	195	303	471,992	481,477	560,196
Girls	235	234	275	505,369	519,271	603,762
Total	431	429	578	977,361	1,000,748	1,163,958
VERBAL						
Boys	488	501	493	437	437	435
Girls	484	489	476	425	426	425
Total	486	494	485	431	431	430
MATH						
Boys	555	566	565	499	501	500
Girls	507	514	503	452	451	453
Total	529	538	535	475	475	476

TABLE 4. SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT) SCORES FOR APS AND NATION 1984-87

Table 4 shows that more APS boys and girls took the SAT in 1986-87 than in the previous year. The overall number of APS students taking the SAT increased from 431 in 1984-85 to 578 in 1986-87. Scores for APS boys and girls decreased slightly on Verbal and Math when compared to the previous year.

Nationally, the total number of students taking the SAT increased. National scores in Verbal and Math remained almost the same as the previous year.



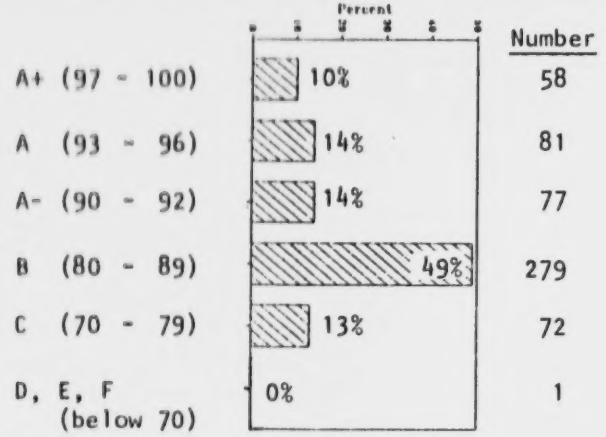
Number of students:

APS	578
Nation	1,163,958

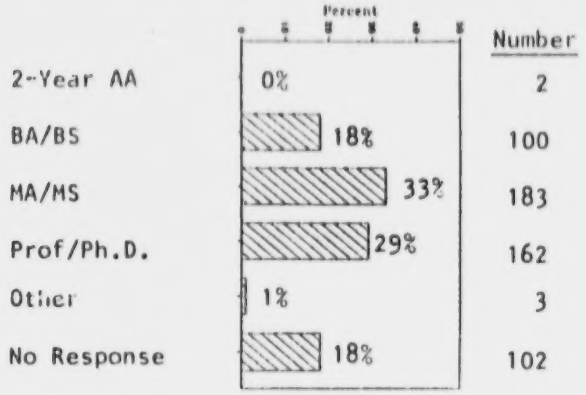
FIGURE 5. SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT) SCORES FOR APS AND NATION 1986-87

Figure 5 shows that APS students score considerably higher than the national average in both Verbal and Math portions of the SAT.

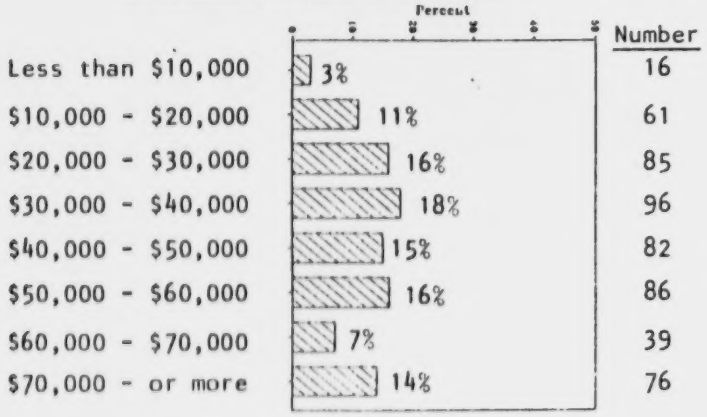
HIGH SCHOOL GRADE POINT AVERAGES



LEVEL OF EDUCATION ASPIRATIONS



ESTIMATED FAMILY INCOME



STUDENT-REPORTED ETHNIC BACKGROUND

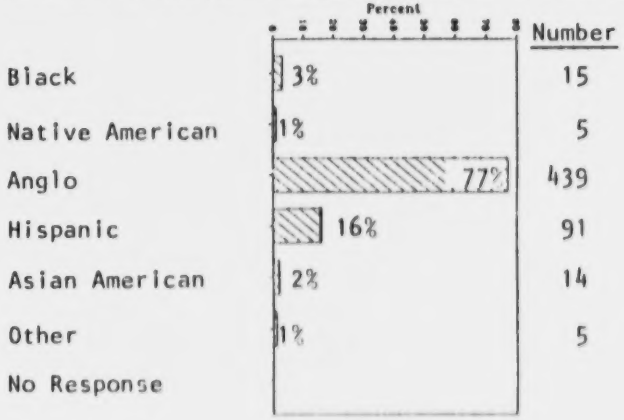


FIGURE 6. CHARACTERISTICS OF APS STUDENTS TAKING THE SAT IN 1986-87

Figure 6 displays student-reported information regarding grades in high school, family income, plans for college and ethnicity. These data are reported from the student questionnaire with no verification with APS student data. Not all pecentages equal 100% due to missing data.

High Schools	ACT		COLLEGE BOARDS - SAT		
	Number of Students	Average Composite Score	Number of Students	Average Verbal	Average Math
Albuquerque	98	18.5	28	508	541
Cibola	210	19.3	28	516	581
Del Norte	280	19.3	55	479	526
Eldorado	520	20.5	145	488	545
Highland	245	20.0	105	454	491
Manzano	327	20.4	49	474	534
Rio Grande	109	18.0	28	468	546
Sandia	404	19.7	105	498	545
Valley	129	17.6	23	529	583
West Mesa	123	17.3	12	512	538

FIGURE 7. ACT & COLLEGE BOARD - SAT SCORES
APS HIGH SCHOOLS
NUMBER OF STUDENTS & AVERAGE SCORES
1986 - 87

Larger number of APS students take the ACT than the SAT. The ACT is accepted by universities and colleges in New Mexico. The SAT is typically taken by students who have plans to attend an out-of-state college or who have not made a definite college choice at the time of testing.

FIGURE 8. STATES WHERE STUDENTS PLAN TO ATTEND COLLEGE

This map of the United States shows the number of APS students who planned to attend college in various states.

ACT - The majority of students taking the ACT (76%) indicated a New Mexico college or university as their choice. Other states where 1987 graduates planned to attend school were Colorado (8%), Arizona (5%), California (7%), and Texas (3%). A number of students (661) did not indicate a preference.

SAT - No percentages are displayed for SAT test takers because the data indicate all locations where students requested their tests scores be sent. The greatest number were sent to California (n = 431), followed by New Mexico (n = 388), Colorado (n = 181), Arizona (n = 125), and Texas (n = 111). These numbers far exceed the number of examinees because each may send results to multiple institutions.